



The Butterfly Mosque

Based on your reading of Wilson's memoirs, discuss what you think are some of the key difficulties in cross-cultural understanding.

Based on your personal experiences with cultural differences:

- How do you assess Wilson's attitude and strategies for overcoming cultural barriers?
- What role, if any, did Islam play in mediating cultural differences between Wilson and her Egyptian family members or neighbors?

When Wilson's and her fiancé's families "agree to love one another" (p. 117), she expressed relief and described their acceptance of one another as "fragile and brave."

- Do you agree with her characterization of their newly formed relationship?
- What does her reading of their relationship reveal about how current international conflicts affect American Muslims' identities and personal relations?

On pp. 68–70, Wilson describes a team-building exercise at the language school where she taught. The exercise divided Egyptian and western employees down cultural lines. She concluded from the exercise that in defining social responsibility, "westerners" tend to emphasize "literal responsibility," while Egyptians focus on "moral responsibility."

- What do you think of her conclusion?
- Are there ways in which people of diverse backgrounds in America also define social responsibility differently?